

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 16, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden Jr.  
President  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

We urge your Administration to neither authorize Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) for Palestinians in the United States nor designate the Palestinian territories for Temporary Protected Status (TPS). As you know, DED and TPS make it more difficult to remove eligible foreign nationals from our country. In light of the ongoing armed conflict in the Gaza Strip, and related domestic protests by foreign nationals from the region, Palestinian aliens should not be incentivized to travel to, or remain in, the United States. We ask that you remember your oath to protect the lives of American citizens and not import a population of potentially radicalized individuals into the United States.

Following the horrific October 7 terrorist attack by Hamas and Israel's response, our nation was wracked by pro-Palestinian and, in some cases, pro-Hamas protests. Activists waved foreign flags. They chanted threatening slogans like, "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free." They destroyed posters that identified Israeli hostages. They defaced public monuments here in Washington, including the gates of the White House, with graffiti. Most horrifying of all, an elderly Jewish man was reportedly murdered by a pro-Palestinian protester in California last week, marking a steep escalation in pro-Palestinian violence.<sup>1</sup>

It is safe to assume that some of these rioters are in our country legally as guests, under one of the many provisions of the INA that allow aliens into the United States on a non-permanent basis. It is also possible that some of them are in our country illegally. Granting violent protesters DED, knowing many have expressed sympathy for a designated foreign terrorist organization, would be a cataclysmic mistake. Such an order would prolong the presence of these aliens, giving them more time for intimidation, violence, and destruction. Additionally, designating the Palestinian territories for TPS would create a magnet for migration, drawing Palestinians into the

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Trotta, *California Jewish man dies after altercation at Israel-Palestinian protests*, Reuters, November 7, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/california-jewish-man-dies-after-altercation-israel-palestinian-protests-2023-11-07/>

United States with the promise of potential legal status. Such a designation would allow any Palestinian already here to stay for an extended period.

Our concerns are hardly speculative. A July 2023 survey<sup>2</sup> revealed that most Palestinians in the Gaza Strip have positive views of Hamas and many support violence against Israel. Nearly 20 percent of Gazans surveyed had a very positive opinion of Hamas, with another 37 percent viewing the terrorist organization somewhat positively. Over 12 percent of Gazans interviewed strongly disagreed with preserving a ceasefire with Israel while over 23 percent somewhat disagreed with the ceasefire. 20 percent of survey respondents in Gaza strongly disagreed when asked if Hamas should stop calling for Israel's destruction, with 28 percent somewhat disagreeing. These are disturbing results that justify extreme caution when considering any Palestinian migration.

We cannot discern that any benefit would come from granting TPS or DED to a foreign population that includes a sizable number of terrorist sympathizers. And neither can neighboring countries, like Egypt and Jordan, which have already rejected the possibility of taking in new Palestinian refugees.<sup>3</sup> We do, however, already have ample evidence of the dangers that granting such designations to Palestinian migrants would entail. And those dangers would be borne heavily by Jewish Americans.

We need only look at Denmark for an example of how Palestinian migration can harm a host country. In 1992, 321 Palestinians were granted residence permits by the Danish government. An August 2020 Danish government survey<sup>4</sup> revealed that, 27 years after Palestinian refugees had been granted residence, a quarter of the 270 original Palestinians still in Denmark had gone to prison, half had been charged fines or other penalties, and two-thirds were on public welfare. The number of Palestinians who would move to or remain in the United States following a grant of DED or TPS would be far larger, multiplying the burden on our police and social services—not to mention the threat to the public order.

For the sake of our fellow American citizens, we ask that you continue your policy of not providing DED and TPS to Palestinian migrants and instead identify and close any vectors for Palestinian migration to the United States. In our humble opinion, we should be finding ways to reduce the number of terrorist sympathizers in America, not increase them.

Sincerely,

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<sup>2</sup> Catherine Cleveland, *Polls Show Majority of Gazans Were Against Breaking Ceasefire; Hamas and Hezbollah Unpopular Among Key Arab Publics*, The Washington Institute, Oct. 10, 2023, [https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/polls-show-majority-gazans-were-against-breaking-ceasefire-hamas-and-hezbollah#:~:text=Overall%2C%2057%25%20of%20Gazans%20express,view%20of%20Fatah%20\(64%25\).](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/polls-show-majority-gazans-were-against-breaking-ceasefire-hamas-and-hezbollah#:~:text=Overall%2C%2057%25%20of%20Gazans%20express,view%20of%20Fatah%20(64%25).)

<sup>3</sup> Nick Robertson, *Jordan, Egypt unwilling to take Palestinian refugees, king says*, The Hill, October 17, 2023, <https://thehill.com/policy/international/4259879-jordan-egypt-unwilling-to-take-palestinian-refugees/>

<sup>4</sup> The Immigration and Integration Committee, *Final Answer to Question 412*, The Danish Parliament, Sept. 21, 2020, <https://www.ft.dk/samling/20191/almdel/uuu/spm/412/svar/1691136/2247791.pdf>.



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JD Vance  
United States Senator



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Marco Rubio  
United States Senator



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Mike Lee  
United States Senator



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Rick Scott  
United States Senator